

T-518

GHOST (Leatherbury sailing skiff)

St. Michaels, Maryland

This vessel is a 16' centerboard sailing skiff, a V-bottomed deadrise bateau with a beam of 5'10". She has a single mast set well forward and is cat-rigged with a single sail. She was built c. 1916-1920 by Captain Charles Edward Leatherbury on the West River at Galesville, Maryland for crabbing and day sailing. GHOST is significant for being an example of an important indigenous Bay craft--the V-bottomed deadrise skiff that developed in the 19th century for crabbing, fishing, and oystering--and for being a surviving example of the work of a well-known local boatbuilder who specialized in the building of such skiffs. The vessel is on display at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. T-518

Magi No. 2105185733

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic GHOST

and/or common Leatherbury sailing skiff CBMM 66-22-1

2. Location

street & number Mill Street ☐ not for publication

city, town St. Michaels ☐ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Talbot

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

street & number telephone no.: 745-2916

city, town St. Michaels state and zip code Maryland 21663

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. liber

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. T-518

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☐ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This boat is a 16' centerboard sailing skiff, a V-bottomed deadrise bateau with a beam of 5'10". She has a single mast set well forward and is cat-rigged with a single sail. She was built c. 1916-1920 by Captain Charles Edward "Ed" Leatherbury, on the West River at Galesville, Maryland for crabbing and day sailing. The boat is built of local loblolly pine, with a straight raking stem and a transom stern with a rudder and tiller for steering. She is partially decked and painted white. As a type, the skiff is related to the larger oyster-dredging skipjacks that developed from crabbing skiffs in the late nineteenth century.

With her open transom the skiff has built-in stern sheets, 16 1/2" wide, running into 9 1/2" wide planks bridged by a thwart. This unit serves as seating in the stern of the boat. The boat is of cross-planked construction, with the planks running into a herringbone pattern towards the stern. The bow is chunk-built, with a large chunk of wood carved to receive the plank ends. Lines are slightly hollow at the waterline on the bow and the boat has a sweeping sheer. There are seven frames fitted into the hull on either side of the plank keel. A stiffening chine-liner runs from the second frame aft to the stern. The centerboard trunk, also a structural component, is 43" long on deck.

The boat is open at the transom, but partially decked-over with a foredeck and 11 1/2" wide washboards, angled slightly at the bow. The washboards overhang the sides of the hull and are finished inside with a 1 1/2" high coaming and outside with heavy beading, serving as a rubrail. The thwart-and-stern-sheets arrangement and centerboard trunk are the only deck structures.

Although currently displayed without her mast, GHOST was cat-rigged with a single mast set into a square mast-step in the keel. Her sail measures 146 square feet of tan #10 canvas from 31" wide bolts. It is bolt-roped with tarred hemp. The sail has a row of reef-points about 5 feet from its lower edge; there are 16 brass sail slides on the luff to hold it to the mast. There is a 16" long oak club, 1 1/2" wide, lashed to the bolt rope in place of a boom. The skiff is steered by a rudder measuring 44" long by 25" wide, mounted on pintles set onto the transom. A tiller is slotted into the head of the rudder. In addition to the sail rig, the boat can be rowed and there are chocks for oarlocks set into the washboards near the stern.

8. Significance

Survey No. T-518

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1916-1920 **Builder/Architect** Capt. Charles Edward "Ed" Leatherbury

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant for being an example of an important indigenous Bay craft--the V-bottomed deadrise skiff that developed in the 19th century for crabbing, fishing, and oystering, and for being a surviving example of the work of a well-known local boatbuilder who specialized in such skiffs--Capt. Ed. Leatherbury.

The Chesapeake Bay crabbing skiff is an indigenous type which is to be seen in many different local forms and variations (at least 15), reflecting design innovations by particular builders or definite regional characteristics. The V-bottom, deadrise form, first seen in the local skiff/bateau vessel type, was later adapted by local boatbuilders to the larger skipjack, or two-sail bateau. Thus, these surviving examples of Chesapeake-area skiffs are important in understanding the construction techniques and design innovations still to be seen today in the surviving skipjack fleet. They also were the means of carrying out an important local occupation--crabbing, fishing, and oystering.

Ed Leatherbury, who worked on the West River on the Western Shore near Galesville, specialized in small sailing or rowing skiffs which he built continuously from the early 'teens into the 1950's. He had a day/hour charter boat business on the West River, for which he supplied the boats. It is commonly said that "no two of his skiffs were alike." There is a related example, a 19 1/2' Leatherbury skiff, in the collection of the Calvert Marine Museum. GHOST shows typical Bay skiff construction with its herringbone planking. It was owned by the same family--the Milton Offutt's of Crownsville, Maryland--from the mid-1920's and used by them on the Severn River until after World War II. Mrs. Offutt donated the boat to the Museum in 1966.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. T-518

Howard I. Chapelle, American Small Sailing Craft (New York: W.W. Norton Co., 1951)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M.E. Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society date 5/84

street & number 201 W. Monument St. telephone 685-3750

city or town Baltimore state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

T-518
Leatherbury Sailing Skiff GHOST
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum
Mill St.
St. Michaels
Saint Michaels Quad.
Talbot Co.





351-38

T-518

GHOST

St. Michaels, Md

starboard bow

M. C. Wootton 4/84